

*Against the Arians* (chap. *id.*).  
According to Athanasius, the *Thalia*  
opened as follows :

<sup>f</sup> According to faith of God's elect,  
God's prudent ones, loly children,  
rightly dividing, God's Holy Spirit  
re-  
ceiving,  
lave I learned this from the  
partakers of wisdom, Accomplished,  
divinely taught, and wise in all things.  
Uong their track have I been  
walking, with like  
opinions. ! am very famous,  
the much suffering for God's

Vnd taught of God, I have  
acquired wisdom and knowledge."

It is rather the unspeakable tediousness and frigid-ty of this exordium than its arrogant impiety that itrike the modern reader. Athanasius then proceeds :o quote examples of Arius's " repulsive and most mpious mockeries/ For example, " God was not al-vays a Father ; there was once a time when God was done and was not yet a Father. But afterwards He >ecame a Father." Or, " the Son was not always," >r " the Word is not very God, but by participation n Grace, He, as all others, is God only in name." If :hese are good specimens of what Athanasius ;alls " the fables to be found in Arius's jocose com-position," the standard of the jocose or the ridicu-ous must have altered greatly. Why such a poem ishould have been called the *Thalia* or " Merrymak-  
ng," it is hard to conceive.

Yet, one can understand how the ribald wits of Alexandria gladly seized upon this portentous **con-**